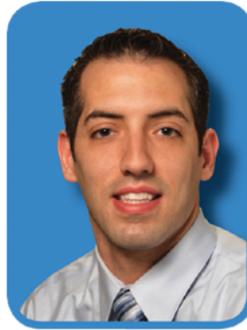




Summer 2016

Coordinator's Corner

Summer is a great time for walking and biking. The weather is great, the days are longer, and many of us have more time for recreational activities. Summer is also a great time to catch up on SRTS planning and preparing for SRTS activities in the fall. You can use these summer months to get organized, connect with school teams and task forces in order to start seamlessly with your programming in September. Two major events take place in the fall - International Walk to School Day and Student Travel Tally Week. To learn more about summer planning, check out the Learn It, Do It, Live It! Guide on Summer Planning.



This summer, I am pleased to introduce [Zone In, Not Out](#), a campaign to improve safety in school zones. We have the initial set of resources on our website to help schools improve school zone safety in a variety of ways.

This newsletter also includes some inspiring articles about how you can make summer an active and memorable time for students in your community. These articles were written by local SRTS coordinators, who are doing interesting things within their programs.

Finally, remember that you are all role models for students, even when school is not in session. Keep active and stay safe while walking and biking. The efforts you make in planning for this fall's SRTS will benefit your children and you.

If you have questions or would like more information on any of the topics included here, please call the Virginia SRTS Hotline at 1-855-601-7787 or send an email to info@virginiasrts.org.

Regards,
Rob Williams
Virginia SRTS Coordinator

IN THIS ISSUE

- Coordinator's Corner
- Zone In, Not Out
- Friends & Faces: Nina Polley and Dr. Rachel Gagen
- Summer Activities
- Student Travel Tally Week
- Fire Up Your Feet Challenge
- QuickStart Mini-grants
- SRTS Calendar
- Responsible Case Management for the Substance Exposed Mature Driver Training

CALENDAR

JUNE

24: Training on Responsible Case Management for the Substance Exposed Mature Driver

AUGUST

11: First QuickStart Mini-grant Application Deadline

Zone In, Not Out

What is Zone In, Not Out?

Zone In, Not Out is a package of resources that can help make school zones safer for all travelers, especially children. The idea for the program was born at an in-person training for Virginia SRTS local coordinators in the winter of 2015. Charged with the task of coming up with a comprehensive approach to school zone safety, including branding, messaging, and materials, the local SRTS coordinators worked in small groups to develop an outline of the program.

The initial set of materials are available for download on the Virginia SRTS program website, with more to be available through the end of the year. The materials offer both 'how to' information and resources for school communities to access for expanded or more in-depth information. Some materials are designed so that you can customize them to your school community. For example, you can add your school name to the Zone in Not out logo.

Friends & Faces: Nina Polley and Dr. Rachel Gagen

For this edition, we spoke with Nina Polley, Lynchburg SRTS Coordinator, and Dr. Rachel Gagen, author of PT Gets Moving.

Safe Routes to School programming doesn't have to end when school lets out in June. This summer, Ms. Polley, Lynchburg District SRTS Coordinator, is planning a storywalk with R.S. Payne Elementary



School to encourage students and their families to walk year round.

A storywalk is an organized walk linked to a story. The activity is designed to promote both literacy and physical education by walking a route described in a book. This storywalk follows the book *PT Gets Moving*, written by Dr. Rachel Gagen, which tells the story of PT (an elementary school student) who walks home from R.S. Payne Elementary School with his friends. The walk, which is a mile and a half long, stops at several landmarks along the way. To stay on track, Ms. Polley will post large laminated pages of the book along the walk to reiterate the story's path. The group will read a portion of the story from the large pages at each landmark before continuing (along with the story's protagonist) to the next location.



Nina Polley



Dr. Rachel Gagen

Coordinating this summer storywalk is part of Ms. Polley's push to get SRTS teams engaged over the summer. Keeping walking and biking top of mind over the summer break will help the teams be ready to kick off back-to-school SRTS activities in the fall. This summer, Ms. Polley also plans to work with SRTS teams on a guide that will outline SRTS programming and school specific data. These guides will help teams plan ahead and maintain momentum in the event of team member turnover.



Students participating in the storywalk

Dr. Gagen's storywalk books are just one of many activities initiated by Live Healthy Lynchburg, which works to improve the health of Lynchburg citizens. The group has organized many programs and campaigns centered on sustainable healthy activities, including community gardens, workplace initiatives, fitness challenges, and many others. Dr. Gagen is planning to write a third storywalk book about another school in Lynchburg to inspire more students to get moving.

Summer Activities

Galax Bike Library

by Linda Mock, Galax SRTS Coordinator

Recently, an introverted 4th grade student at Galax Elementary School kicked his lack of self-confidence by learning how to ride a bicycle. The student did not have a bike, so he borrowed one from the Galax Bike Library.

The Galax Bike Library was created in 2013, when the city of Galax, working in cooperation with the Galax City Public Schools, received a VDOT Safe Routes to School non-infrastructure grant to purchase thirty bicycles and helmets of various sizes. To store the bikes, the school purchased a 12' x 20' storage building on the city's parks and recreation department grounds, a half mile from the New River Trail State Park and a great place for biking. Bicycles from the library are also used for bike rodeos or other bike safety training. Any student with parent permission can "check out" a bicycle and helmet during library hours and can ride anywhere they want. The Library also provides full sized bikes for parents who wish to enjoy the ride with their children.

About 20 students a month take a bike out of the library one day at a time. Loaned bicycles must be returned in the same condition as when loaned out and any problems reported to the recreation staff. A local bike shop and park personnel attend to any



Bikes in the Galax Bike Library

needed repairs. The Bike Library is open during the same hours as the Galax Recreation Center: 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Friday, with shorter hours on the weekend.

The Bike Library has proven to be a great way for students and families who don't own bicycles to learn how to ride, get some exercise, or just have a fun time.

Harrisonburg Middle School Biking and Walking Promotional Exercise

by Matt Hassman, Harrisonburg SRTS Coordinator

As the Harrisonburg SRTS Coordinator, one of my favorite groups to work with are the middle schoolers. They are on the verge of becoming independent and regularly test boundaries. This is generally a tough time in human development; it's when people start really choosing what they like and what they don't.

While thinking about how to promote walking and biking to middle schoolers, a thought occurred to me, "I don't know what it's like to be them." I could only make educated guesses at what kinds of programs and activities would encourage these people to choose active transportation. The clearest path to the answer was to just ask them.

To find out, Jon DeVier-Scott, a teacher who has been supporting bike and walking programs for years, and I held a breakfast brainstorming session with students that currently walk or ride to school. We told them that we have no idea what it's like to be in 7th grade now and needed their insight.



Notes from the brainstorming session

We asked: "Why do you walk/ride to school? Do you think you'll continue through high school? Do people ever make fun of you for it?" (Nope! the freedom it provides is actually enviable). And of course, "What do you think could encourage your peers to join in?"

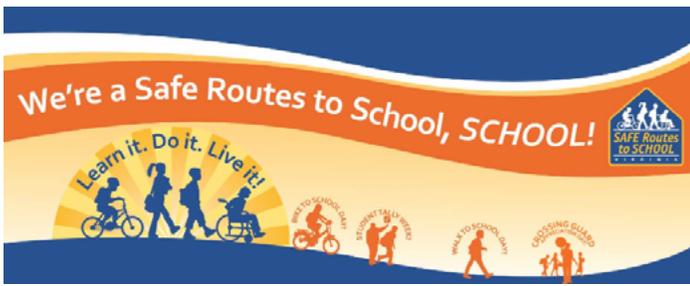
They shared, and we listened. They provided a ton of great ideas about what motivates them, what infrastructure is needed, and what programs could help. One of my favorite ideas was to start a recreational after school riding club. This would offer the opportunity to teach riding skills in the real world -- a chance to explore and exercise their freedom, while showing parents that they can be trusted. Some other great ideas were to provide free time for students who walk and bike on designated days, PE credit for walking or biking to school, and offering a bike maintenance clinic during free period. They gave me plenty to work with.

I'm planning to take this information and implement whatever I can. In addition to all this valuable information, a major "win" from this activity was growing relationships with the students and faculty at this school. SRTS Coordinators, remember to listen! The students know exactly what is keeping them from choosing active transportation.

If we only ask them, we can make our job of breaking down those barriers that much easier.

Student Travel Tally Week

If your school was one of the 218 that participated in this year's Bike to School Day, you will be receiving a Virginia Safe Routes to School Bike to School Day decal. This decal is meant to be displayed on a Virginia SRTS Banner.



Wondering how to get a banner and whether other decals are available?

The Virginia SRTS program sends a program banner to all schools who participate in the statewide survey of how students travel to school. Called [Student Travel Tally Week](#) (STTW), this event occurs over two days during one week in either September or October (each school chooses the week that works best for them). Classroom teachers use a 'show of hands' method to record how students get to and from school. This information is useful for tracking a school's SRTS program success and encouraging greater participation.

We hope you enjoy your decal and will consider participating in STTW and earning a banner to show your commitment to being a Safe Routes to School, School! Other opportunities to earn decals for SRTS

activities include Walk to School Day (October) and Crossing Guard Appreciation Day (February). Visit our [program website](#) for free resources and to learn more about how to participate in these events.

Fire Up Your Feet Challenge!

K-8 schools can earn cash awards to support walking, bicycling, and physical activity programs by entering the Fire Up Your Feet challenge. Register at www.fireupyourfeet.org and then track your students physical activity during the month of October. The more students that participate, the greater your chance of winning a prize!

QuickStart Mini-Grants

Congratulations to the following schools that received QuickStart Mini-grants in February, March, and April 2016.

- Virginia Avenue Charlotte DeHart Elementary, Winchester; Bike safety program.
- Westbriar Elementary, Vienna; Monthly walking and biking events.
- Lowes Island Elementary, Sterling; Walking Wednesdays and walk-a-thon.
- Laurel Hill Elementary School, Lorton; Walk and roll days and SRTS awareness and programming.
- Paul H Cale Elementary, Charlottesville; Mountain biking club.
- John C Myers Elementary, Broadway; Walk and bike to school day and pedestrian and bicycle safety education.

- South River Elementary, Grottoes; Walking mileage club.
- Gravely Elementary School, Haymarket; Count your steps program.
- Plains Elementary, Timberville; Bicycle and pedestrian safety course.
- Olde Creek Elementary, Fairfax; Bike to school day and rodeo.
- All K-8 Schools in Charlottesville; Bike parade.
- West Springfield Elementary School, Springfield; Bike to school day.
- Lake Anne Elementary, Reston; Monthly walk and roll to school days.
- Pinebrook Elementary, Aldie; Bike rodeo.
- 4 Middle Schools in Arlington County; Earn-a-bike program
- Mountain View Elementary, Penn Laird; Bike rodeo.
- McGaheysville Elementary, McGaheysville; Bike rodeo.
- 17 Elementary Schools in Stafford County; Story walk.

To date, the QuickStart Mini-grant program has helped fund Safe Routes to School activities at more than 175 different schools, some of which have benefitted from multiple grants. The \$1,000 awards are a great way to jump start your Safe Routes to School program at the beginning of the school year.

Want to add your school to the list? There are three application deadlines for fall 2016. Bookmark the link to the [online application](#) and mark your calendar with the following dates:

- August 11
- September 8
- October 13

SRTS Calendar for the 2016-2017 School Year

The 2016-2017 SRTS Calendar is here! This resource can help you underscore the importance of working with your school and school division to get SRTS events on the official calendar so that students, parents, and staff can look forward to and prepare for Safe Routes events. It also includes a customizable academic calendar with important SRTS dates filled in that can be used in the classroom or to help plan for SRTS events.



These dates include:

- Fall and Spring: QuickStart Mini-grant Due dates
- Fall and Spring: Walkabout Mini-grant Due dates
- October 5: International Walk to School Day
- September-October: Student Travel Tally Week
- February 8: Crossing Guard Appreciation Day
- May 10: Bike to School Day

Download your copy of the calendar [here](#), and visit the [Resource Library](#) on our website for more tools to help you plan SRTS activities for the coming year.

Responsible Case Management for the Substance Exposed Mature Driver Training

In June 2016, the Virginia Department of Health, Virginia Commonwealth University, and state and local substance abuse and safety focused organizations are partnering to offer a free forum that will provide healthcare providers with knowledge and skills to apply in the clinical practice for addressing the elements of responsible case management of the substance exposed mature driver.

Register online at <http://www.vcuhealth.org/cme>. Select the training scheduled for June 24th.

